Mindful Inclusion for People Leaders
Virtual Workshop

BACKGROUND

Unconscious bias in recruitment, selection, promotion, development, and everyday workplace interaction limits the strategic potential that can flow from a diverse workforce for higher-quality problem solving and decision making, innovation and creativity, accessing diverse customers and suppliers, and attracting and energising top global talent.

Unconscious bias refers to attitudes and beliefs we hold towards particular social groups that occur outside of conscious awareness and influence our responses. As we are repeatedly exposed to stereotypical associations and prejudices from an early age, these become automated in our long-term memory. Even individuals who truly believe they are non-prejudiced hold unconscious biases.

Unconscious bias at work has profound implications—when we make decisions on who gets a job, who gets disciplined or promoted, who we chose to develop, who we see as a confidante or as a suitable mentee, and whose ideas we solicit, give consideration to, and favour, we may be adding our own subliminal and emotional criteria to that decision.

Bias can also contribute to hostile workplace, bullying and harassment. Bias can also be woven into the fabric of an organisation as processes and practices that systematically favour some groups over others.

Reducing unconscious bias at work is a critical component of an organisation's efforts to create a diverse and inclusive work setting in which all employees contribute fully to work processes. Addressing unconscious bias at work is problematic because, by its definition, an individual will most likely be unaware of its influence. Fortunately, research has shown that we can override our reflexive responses with controlled and conscious thought or reflection.

Cognisance of bias is a distinguishing trait of an inclusive leader. When leaders develop the capability to monitor and manage their own and others' biases, they are more likely to champion and model inclusive mindsets and behaviours required for cultural change. Also, as leaders develop their cognisance of bias, they display an increased willingness to challenge institutionalised bias and to commit resources for the design and implementation of inclusive work practices.

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Using experiential 'a-ha' activities that 'show' rather than 'tell' participants their biases, workshop participants develop an awareness of their own and others' biases. They also learn when they are most susceptible to bias as well as proven techniques for overriding ingrained bias and monitoring and adjusting their automatic responses in the workplace. In addition, participants learn evidence-based techniques for responding to bias in others without triggering backlash or defensiveness as well as knowledge of strategies for inclusive interactions. Participants leave with a personalised action-plan for managing their own and others' bias.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The workshop is facilitated over three x 75 minute online modules delivered at least one week apart.

01 The nature and origin of bias, including social and cognitive biases

02 The implications of bias for work, including discrimination, microinsults, bullying & harassment, exclusion, wellbeing, covering, psychological safety, collaboration, stereotype threat

03 Five proven leadership skills for managing bias in self and others: monitoring decision-making for bias, running inclusive meetings, being an upstander, practicing microaffirmations, and seeking feedback on your biases & blindspots

PARTICIPANTS

To optimise participation and learning outcomes in a virtual setting, we recommend a maximum workshop size of 15 participants.

APPROACH

Workshop facilitation combines expert instruction with group coaching methodology. Group coaching adapts the principles and methods of individual executive coaching and applies them to small intentional groups of peole leaders. All Include-Empower workshops incorporate experiential learning to maximise learning outcomes and adopt an inclusive approach to prevent defensiveness and backlash that can result from poorly designed D&I programs.

OUTCOMES

Enhance Awareness

- Understanding the nature, origin, and consequences of implicit and explicit bias
- Awareness of one's own and other's bias

Transfer Skills

- Techniques to manage bias in self and others
- Techniques for eliciting and integrating diversity of thought and fostering a collaboative work setting

Motivate Behavioural Change

- Respect for and willingness to embrace individual differences and diverse perspectives
- Willingness to flex leadership and interpersonal style

Effective management of unconscious bias will support business outcomes by improving your ability to attract, retain and engage top talent; engage effectively with diverse stakeholders; and drive creativity, innovation and higher quality decision-making through the effective integration of diverse perspectives and experiences.